



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIES
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WHAT IS APPRENTICESHIP?

Apprenticeship training is the time-proven method of systematically producing highly skilled workers. In this state, it is a voluntary Labor and Management effort. Apprenticeship is, in simple terms, a system of training in which a person desiring to learn a specific apprenticeable occupation is given instruction and experience on the job, as well as school courses related to such occupation.

This method of training is so important that it is covered by a statute, which is known as the Washington State Apprenticeship Act. The Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council (WSATC) is a seven-member, policy-making authority that oversees the apprenticeship training program statewide. There are also two (2) ex-officio members, one (1) each from the Employment Security Department and the Washington State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board. The Apprenticeship Section is the administrative arm of the WSATC.

Apprenticeship training is conducted at the local level by more than 230 apprenticeship committees (covers approximately 600 programs) in throughout the state. These committees are approved by and registered with the WSATC. The local committee is composed of an equal number of representatives from Labor and Management. This committee supervises the training of apprentices for a given apprenticeable occupation(s) within a specified geographical area. It has the responsibility of screening and selecting those applicants who will be indentured as apprentices.

Each committee develops a written apprenticeship training plan called standards of apprenticeship. These standards are approved by and registered with the WSATC. Contained in these standards are the requirements that the apprentice, the employer, and the committee must abide by, such as:

1. The geographical area covered by the standards.
2. Qualifications for becoming an apprentice. This includes age, education, and other pertinent requirements.
3. Selection procedure and affirmative action outreach activities.

4. Ratio of apprentices to journeyman.
5. A statement of the term of apprenticeship--total time to be spent in training.
6. A progressively increasing scale of wages, usually starting at 50% of the journeyman's scale and increasing at specific intervals throughout the term of apprenticeship.
7. A listing of the work processes to be performed and the number of hours to be spent in each category.
8. A statement regarding related instruction requirements. The law requires a minimum of 144 hours per year in classes pertaining to the necessary theory and basic principals of the trade. These classes are usually held after work in a local educational facility.
9. A statement that apprentices are required to work under the supervision of a journeyman at all times.
10. Administrative rules adopted by the committee
11. A list of Labor and Management representatives responsible for the administration of the apprenticeship training program.

To become an apprentice, the first step is to apply to the appropriate committee. If an applicant does not have this information, inquiry may be made to the office of the Apprenticeship Section in Tumwater or to one of its field offices, which are located in Tukwilla, Tacoma, Mt. Vernon, Longview, Spokane, and Moses Lake.

Upon acceptance into a program, an applicant is required to sign an Apprenticeship Agreement, which is then registered by the committee with the Apprenticeship Section.

Upon completion of apprenticeship, the WSATC awards a Certificate of Completion indicating that the individual has completed all requirements and is considered to be a fully qualified journeyman.